

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated July 7, 2006, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-12 and 14-19 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over DiPietropolo in view of the Tangram Technology Data File.

Applicants have submitted a declaration from one of the inventors that the selection of PEEK material was opposite to the prevailing view of materials for the claimed combination.

In view of this declaration it is believed appropriate that the rejection claims 1, 2, 4-12 and 14-19 be withdrawn.

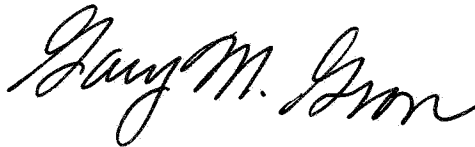
The small entity status of the assignee of this invention has changed to a large entity and therefore applicant has paid the large entity fee for the Request for Continued Examination.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gary M. Gron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

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